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NEWS RELEASE

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DEFENDANT PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD IN T.J. MAXX AND MARSHALLS STORES RECEIPT SCHEME

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that LATOYA LAWSON, age 31, of Sacramento, pleaded guilty before United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell to one count of wire fraud in connection with her role in a duplicate-purchase-receipt scheme that defrauded TJX Companies Inc., operators of T.J. Maxx and Marshalls retail merchandise stores, of more than \$50,000.

The prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the U.S. Secret Service. The investigation has also resulted in charges against a second defendant, HOWARD GLOYD, who allegedly engaged in a similar scheme. GLOYD was arrested last week and was ordered detained pending trial.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Courtney J. Linn, who is prosecuting this case and the parallel case against defendant HOWARD GLOYD, from approximately 1999 through August 2003, LAWSON and others associated with her engaged in a duplicate merchandise return scheme. As part of her plea, LAWSON admitted that she and her associates would make an initial purchase of merchandise at a T.J. Maxx or Marshalls store in Northern California, and that the purchase transaction would generate an authentic purchase receipt. Using duplicates of these authenticate purchase receipts, LAWSON conducted approximately 260 fraudulent return transactions in the greater Sacramento and Stockton areas and received more than \$50,000 from T.J. Maxx and Marshalls. One of her associates conducted an additional 115 fraudulent duplicate receipt transactions, receiving \$23,191.58, and another associate

conducted an additional 63 such transactions, receiving approximately \$11,852.49.

In a separate indictment, defendant HOWARD GLOYD is charged with engaging in a similar scheme in which he allegedly obtained more than \$70,000 from T.J. Maxx and Marshalls using fraudulent duplicate receipts.

LAWSON's sentencing is scheduled for April 21, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. before United States District Judge Frank C. Damrell. The maximum sentence for LAWSON's offense of conviction is twenty years imprisonment, and a fine of \$250,000. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors. The charges in the parallel case against defendant HOWARD GLOYD are only allegations and defendant GLOYD is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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